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Liberty

NOT THE DAUGHTER BUT THE MOTHER OF ORDER — PROUDHON

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"For always in thine eyes, O Liberty!
Shines that high light whereby the world is saved;
And though thou slay us, we will trust in thee."
JOHN HAY.

On Picket Duty.

"Henry George could say that throughout a life of controversy there was no single man to whom he could not give his hand." You are mistaken, Poultney Bigelow. There was one to whom he could not give his hand,—one who would not take it. He tried it once, and was refused.

This is to bear the tidings to whom it may concern that Mr. Whidden Graham, Single Taxer and George man-of-all-work in the late campaign, is a liar, a wilful liar, a wanton liar, and withal a most loquacious and prolific liar. "The best is," wrote seventeenth-century Thomas Fuller in his "Church History of Britain," "that unconscionable liars, though they most hurt themselves, do the least harm other, seeing no wise man will believe them."

I am in receipt of an interesting prospectus issued from England by an Anarchistic comrade, formerly of this country, but for some years past a resident of Great Britain,—one who has occasionally contributed to Liberty over various pen-names. His prospectus announces a forthcoming bi-monthly,—appearing, that is to say, in alternate months, beginning with January, 1898,—entitled "The Eagle and the Serpent." The publication is to be an organ of the philosophy of Nietzsche, and the significance of its symbolical title may be gathered from the sentence from Nietzsche which the editor selects as his motto: "The proudest animal under the sun and the wisest animal under the sun have set out to reconnoitre." In the opening number this motto will be criticised by Mr. Walter Crane, and to this criticism the editor, who is to be known to his readers as "Volcano," will reply. In form "The Eagle and the Serpent" will be a pamphlet of sixteen pages, and the subscription price is sixty cents a year, which may be remitted from this country, either by postal money order or in United States postage stamps, to "Eagle Publishing Company, 17 Johnson's Court, Fleet Street, London, E. C., England." The venture is an extremely interesting one, and I shall watch it attentively. Furthermore, I urge all my readers to aid it by subscribing. When it has made its appearance, I shall have something more to say about it. For the present I append to these words of encouragement a single criticism. The prospectus foreshadows inculcation of Egoism and opposition to exploitation. Good! But to oppose exploitation is to favor equal liberty, because there can be no exploitation save by violation of liberty. Now, equal liberty is to Nietzsche a thing abhorrent. Therefore this enterprise betrays a vital inconsistency at the start. In making Nietzsche central instead of incidental it virtually pledges itself to the exploitation of a class of serfs by a class of "Over-Men." But, knowing the editor as I do, I am sure that he will not fulfil this pledge. Consequently he will satisfy neither the extreme Nietzscheites on the one hand or the Anarchists on the other. Nietzsche says splendid things,—often, indeed, Anarchistic things,—but he is no Anarchist. It is for the Anarchists, then, to intellectually exploit this would-be exploiter. He may be utilized profitably, but not prophetably.

By all means read John Beverley Robinson's essay on "Ethics," printed on other pages of this issue of Liberty. It is very strong, very taking, very true. It has given me great pleasure. Nevertheless I dissent from the incidental statement that "under egoism it becomes possible to hate the 'sin and love the sinner.'" The sinner is nothing but his sins plus his virtues, as the saint is nothing but his virtues minus his sins. It is according to the balance that either must be loved or hated, and that the sinner, though not to be morally denounced, must be passionately detested. It is one of the best things about egoism that it educates the taste, develops love and hate, intensifies sympathy and repellence, distinguishes between the admirable and the despicable, and exposes the impotence of that worthless all-inclusive love preached by Jesus Christ and Leo Tolstoi, but not, I hope, by John Beverley Robinson.

The manner in which Liberty has been published for the past year is very unsatisfactory. The effort to maintain a regular issue not only fails, but makes it impossible either to increase the book and pamphlet propaganda or to conduct that which already exists. Therefore, although I am as determined as ever that the publication of Liberty in some form or other shall not be permanently abandoned, I have decided to cease, for the immediate future, the attempt to issue the paper regularly. In order that I may not lose touch with my readers, I shall publish three, four, or five numbers a year, according to my capacity and at irregular intervals, each of these numbers figuring on the subscription accounts as one of a volume of twelve numbers at the present subscription price. In the mean time I shall endeavor to dispose of all orders and correspondence now on hand as well as of all that may henceforth come, and shall begin the publication, very slowly, but as fast as my means may permit, of new books and pamphlets Anarchistic in character. I may also, from time to time, issue a work not specifically Anarchistic, but bearing in a general way upon the progressive trend, and thus gradually reestablish the publishing business which I was forced, several years ago, to abandon in Boston. If Liberty's friends will lend enthusiastic aid to the introduction of my publications to their acquaintances and to the booksellers, a business can be built up which will not only be self-supporting, but strong enough to warrant thereafter the *regular* publication of Liberty in a more effective form than ever.

Possibly some readers of Liberty may care to read a symposium on education which appears in the January number of the "Educational Review," published in this city by Henry Holt & Co. The contributors are Charles H. Matchett and Lucien Sanial, on behalf of State Socialism, and Dr. Gertrude B. Kelly and myself, on behalf of Anarchism. So far as my contribution is concerned, my readers will find in it nothing new to them; it consists of three or four pages of chatter in answer to a reporter's questions. While, in substance, there is nothing in it that I would qualify, an apology is needed for the crudity of language and lack of system and finish which generally characterize the attempt of one who is not an accomplished talker to give off-hand expression to important truth.

M. Octave Mirbeau, translations of whose remarkable newspaper articles have so often appeared in these columns, has entered upon the dramatist's career with the production of an Anarchistic play which the French critics, almost with one accord, pronounce a *chef d'œuvre*. I wish I could print an account of it in Liberty, together with extracts from the criticisms. Sarah Bernhardt accepted the piece enthusiastically as soon as Mirbeau had read it to her, and straightway produced it at her theatre in Paris, she herself playing, for the first time in her career, the part of a working woman. The play is entitled "Les Mauvais Bergers," meaning "The Bad Shepherds," the shepherds referring symbolically to the politicians whose flocks the people are. Here it may be noted that the stupid and ignorant "Sun" (I would not sneer at this paper's ignorance, were it not so boastful of its learning) gave, as a translation of the title, "The Bad Peasants," which of course is meaningless in this connection.

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"In abolishing rent and interest, the last vestiges of old-time slavery, the Revolution abolishes at one stroke the sword of the executioner, the seal of the magistrate, the club of the policeman, the gauge of the excisesman, the erasing-knife of the department clerk, all those insignia of Politics, which young Liberty grinds beneath her heel." — PROUDHON.

☞ The appearance in the editorial column of articles over other signatures than the editor's initial indicates that the editor approves their central purpose and general tenor, though he does not hold himself responsible for every phrase or word. But the appearance in other parts of the paper of articles by the same or other writers by no means indicates that he disapproves them in any respect, such disposition of them being governed largely by motives of convenience.

The Account of Henry George.

CR.	DR.
Though he gave no new thought to the world, yet, being gifted with a singularly lucid expository style, he did more to stimulate economic thought among the people than any other writer of English that ever lived.	While running for office, and for the purpose of increasing his chance of election, he declared guilty of murder, and helped to send to the gallows, four champions of labor whom he knew to be innocent of any offence worse than the expression of their opinions.

Whether or no a monument be built to him by "Peach" Depew, Joe Pulitzer, and Pat Gleason, posterity, striking the balance, will declare its satisfaction that he lived, and its joy that he died. T.

Anarchy is Order.

[Continued.]

VIII.—THAT THE PEOPLE HAS NOTHING TO EXPECT FROM ANY PARTY.

But the disappearance of the government, the annihilation of the governmental institution, the triumph of liberty of which all parties talk, would really suit no party, for I have superabundantly proved that a party, from the very fact that it is a party, is essentially governmental. Consequently the parties take good care not to let the people think that it can do without government. The upshot of their continual controversy is that the government behaves badly and pursues an evil policy, but that it might behave better and that its policy might be better. After all is said, beneath each journalist's article lies this thought: if I were there, you should see how I would govern!

Well, let us see if there really is an equitable way of governing; let us see if it is possible to establish a directing government, a government of initiative, a power, an authority, on the democratic basis of respect for the individual.

It is important that I should examine this question searchingly, for I have said that the people has nothing to expect from any government or from any party, and I must hasten to give my proofs.

Let us suppose that 1852 has arrived, and that you—you of the Mountain, you Socialists, or even you Moderates—have the power which you hope to have. The Left has an imposing majority; I applaud; give them welcome. Compliments passed, what is your conception of your task?

I overlook your internal divisions; I shut my eyes to the fact that you have among you Girardin, Proudhon, Louis Blanc, Pierre Leroux, Considerant, Cabet, Raspail, and their disciples; I grant that perfect union prevails among you; to serve you, I suppose the impossible, for my main desire is to facilitate the argument.

You are in accord then; what are you going to do?

Set free all political prisoners,—a general amnesty? Good. Of course you will not except the princes, for thereby you would seem to fear them, and this fear would betray distrust of yourselves; it would be a confession that they might be preferred to you, and would imply that you were not certain to produce general happiness and prosperity.

Injustices repaired in the political sphere, let us come to economy and social problems.

It is needless to say that you who have denounced Fould will not declare the nation bankrupt; national honor will lay upon you the duty of respecting the Bourse to the detriment of thirty-five millions of taxpayers; the debt created by the monarchies is of so noble a character that the French people must not think of refusing to bleed themselves annually of four hundred and fifty millions for the benefit of a handful of stockjobbers. You will begin, then, by saving the debt; we shall be ruined, but still honorable. These two terms scarcely harmonize in these days, but, after all, it is the old time that you continue, and the debt-involved people will think, as before, what it pleases.

But you intend, first of all, I imagine, to lift the burden from the poor, the laborers, the proletaires; you will come with a law taxing the rich. Well and good! I am a capitalist, and you ask me for one per cent. The devil! how am I going to get out of that? On reflection, I do not use my capital, I lend it to industry; the manufacturer, having great need of it, will not forego its use for an extra one per cent; upon him, then, I will unload the tax. The tax on capital falls squarely on the nose of labor.

I am a bondholder, and you tax the coupon; this is disturbing, indeed. Still there is a way out. Who is it that owes? The State. Since it is the State, the misfortune is not great; the tax on the coupon immediately depreciates by so much the value of this coupon; the coupon being depreciated to the prejudice of the debtor, who is the State, and to the profit of the treasury, which is the State, the State takes from its pocket to deposit in its vault; thus it is quits, and so am I. The trick is a very pretty one, and I confess that you are extremely clever.

I am an owner of apartment-houses, and you tax my flats; to that I have nothing, absolutely nothing, to say. You will settle the matter with my tenants; for certainly you do not think me so stupid as not to cover myself in the rent.

The most senseless phrase uttered since the revolution of February is this: TAX THE RICH! a phrase, if not perverse, at least utterly thoughtless. I know not whom they call rich in a country like this, where everybody is in debt, and where fashion and custom impel most proprietors, bondholders, and capitalists to spend annually more than their income. But, admitting the rich man, I defy you to reach him; your attempts to do so show nothing but gross ignorance of the elementary laws of social economy and solidarity of interests. The blow that you would strike the rich will fall straight upon the manufacturer, the proletaire, the poor man. Would you relieve the poor of burden? Then tax nobody. Administer France with two hundred million francs; two hundred millions, in a country like France, are to be found almost without looking for them; do we not give a hundred simply to smoke bad cigars?

But then you could only administer, and you want to govern,—a very different thing. Suppose, then, that you strike the rich, and will settle your accounts with the poor later.

Already, through the formation of your budget, you have a considerable number of malcontents on your hands; these questions of money, you see, are very delicate. But let us pass on.

Do you proclaim unlimited liberty of the press? That is forbidden you. You will not change the basis of of taxation, you will not touch the State treasury, without exposing yourself to a discussion from which you will not easily extricate yourself. I feel personally disposed to prove, as clear as daylight, your incapacity in this direction, and your own preservation would make it your imperative duty to silence me, to say nothing of the fact that thereby you would do well.

Because of the budget, then, the press would not be free. No government with a large budget can proclaim liberty of the press; that is expressly forbidden it. Promises will not be wanting, but to promise is not to keep; ask M. Bonaparte.

Evidently you will keep the department of public instruction and the university monopoly; only you will give education an exclusively philosophical tendency, declaring atrocious war upon the clergy and the Jesuits, in consequence of which I shall become a Jesuit against you, as I am now a philosopher against M. de Montalembert, in the name of my liberty, which consists in being what I please, without you or the Jesuits having anything to say about it.

And will you abolish the department of public worship? I doubt it. I imagine that, in the interest of the governomaniacs, you will prefer the creation of departments to their suppression. There will be a department of public worship, as there is today, and I shall pay the priest, the minister, and the rabbi because I go to neither mass, meeting-house, or sacrament.

You will preserve the department of commerce, the department of agriculture, the department of public works, and, above all, the department of the interior, for you will have prefects, sub-prefects, State police, etc; and, while maintaining and directing all these de-

partments, which constitute precisely the tyranny of to-day, you will not thereby be prevented from saying that the press, education, worship, commerce, public works, and agriculture are free. But they say as much now. What would you do that is not done at the present hour? I will tell you what you would do; instead of attacking, you would defend yourselves.

I see nothing left for you but to completely change the personnel of the departments and the courts, and to act toward the reactionaries as the reactionaries act toward you. But that is not called governing; does this system of reprisals constitute government? If I may judge by what has been going on for the last sixty years; if I consider the only thing that you have to do on becoming the government,—I affirm that to govern is simply to beat, to avenge, to punish. Now, if you do not perceive that it is over our shoulders that you are beaten and that you beat your adversaries, we, at any rate, cannot pretend to be ignorant of it, and I consider it time for this spectacle to end.

To sum up the powerlessness of any government whatever to achieve the public good, I will say that good can come only from reforms. Now, every reform being inevitably a liberty, and every liberty being a new strength gained by the people and consequently an impairment of the integrity of power, it follows that the path of reform, which for the people is the path of liberty, is for power only the path of decline. If, then, you were to say that you desire power in order to effect reforms, you would thereby confess that you want to attain power with the deliberate purpose of abdication.

Besides the fact that I do not find in myself sufficient stupidity to believe you as intelligent as that, I perceive that it would be contrary to all natural or social laws, and principally to that of self-preservation, which no being can escape, for men invested with public power to strip themselves, of their own free will, both of the investiture and of the princely right which it gives them to live in luxury without the fatigue of producing it. Tell that to the marines!

Your government can have but one object,—to take revenge upon the government now existing,—just as the government that shall follow you will have but one object,—to take revenge upon you.

Industry, production, commerce, the affairs of the people, the interests of the multitude, cannot be harmonized with these pugilistic exercises; I propose that you be left alone to dislocate your jaws, while we go about our business.

If French journalism wishes to be worthy of the people which it addresses, it must cease cavilling about the miserable nothings of politics.

Let the rhetoricians manufacture at their ease laws which interests and customs will leave far in the rear, when it shall please you not to interrupt with your useless bawling the free development of interests and of the manifestation of custom.

Politics has never taught any one a way of honorably earning his dinner; its precepts have served only to reward idleness and encourage vice.

Then talk to us no more of politics. Fill your columns with economic and communal studies; tell us of the useful things that have been invented; tell us of the discoveries, in any country whatsoever, materially or morally, advantageous to increase of production or to promotion of comfort; keep us informed concerning the progress of industry, in order that from this information we may derive the means of earning our living and of living in comfort. All that is of more importance to us, I declare to you, than your stupid dissertations on the balance of powers and on the violation of a constitution which, had it remained virgin, would not have seemed to me, to speak frankly to you, very worthy of my respect.

A. Bellegarigue.

[To be continued.]

The Missing Word.

High up in air, with the rumble of the world below coming to us as from a distant cataract.

"Click, click," went the types, as I set up the wordy nothingness of a great Sunday newspaper.

It was Saturday night. The full force was on; we had hardly room to turn. The foreman was bustling about to get to press on time. A hungering public anxiously awaited the appearance of the "Daily Monumental Fake."

Suddenly a strange voice at my elbow:

"We want you to speak a few words at Kropotkine's"—

"S'death! Not that name here. Man, are you a boy? When, where, what—be quick!"

"Cooper Union—Monday next—Admission five cents."

"Very well. I'm no five-center. Mine's straight goods. But," in a whisper, "he's brave's a lion. I'll be there."

. . . . . .

And now am I on the platform of Cooper Union. The pleasing cadence of Kropotkine, soft and gentle, spreads over a sea of upturned faces. It is a motley gathering, presenting a composite of all nations. Woman, as usual, is there in all colors; so is man; fair, dark, wan, pallid,—largely pallid. Attentive, eager, expectant.

"How do you like it?" This from a member of the committee.

I hesitated. For a full half-hour I had listened closely, and had yet to hear the Word spoken.

"Too much Socialism; not enough Anarchy," said I.

"Oh, well; he will come to that later."

And so I waited, and waited, upon this foe of authority for the much-dreaded Word. Here was the red of reds. Surely he had not forgotten it. At his feet a staff of faking reporters; in front, a breathless audience—all waiting, waiting, waiting. And still it did not burst forth from his bearded lips with either telling force or mild acclaim.

Patience, patience, I repeated softly; surely in all those words he must find it.

. . . . . .

And I. There was I, with serious demean and more serious tongue, ready to hold up that one particular Word against all comers.

It was I who was held up.

Another half-hour sped on, and yet, and yet. Alas and alack! "Socialism, Socialism, Socialism,"—such was the rounding-off of almost every period. Would that I could have fled the scene! My hat was lost; I could not.

Oh, that my head was in it!

And where was Tucker? Where, indeed? Dropped off at Chickering Hall. Now left me standing alone on the burning deck. Now, I'll bet, smiling, laughing, in his den.

"Socialism, Socialism, Socialism," came the mocking refrain.

Oh, damn Socialism! Give me that Word, or give me—my hat!

At last it ceased amid a roar of broken accent, deep gutturals, and woman's lovely Ahs.

. . . . . .

"Combinations of men for whatever purpose," I began, "be they governmental, fraternal, religious, or trade-union, have, at one time or another, a tendency to go wrong, abusing the trusts imposed"——

"Cut it short," cried he of the committee, behind me. I assent, having no desire to prolong the agony. The reporters scribble vigorously.

"A compulsory combination, such as a State, can give away the sustenance of the people to a few, and then protect the latter by force of arms paid for by the taxation of the disinherited.

"It can emasculate the courts of law, imprison men without trial, levy injunctions on labor, intimidate, browbeat, fritter time away in legislative halls, and never fail to draw a salary; promise relief on election day, and never attempt to give it; it can look on undisturbed at the sufferings of labor, and cry out, with increasing insolence, 'Pay up!'"

"Cut it short," again said the voice.

"It can shoot down its victims who rise in protest, in Cour d'Alene, in Leadville, in Buffalo, in Homestead, in Chicago, California, Hazelton; wherever it is, it holds full sway. Still its taxes are paid. Aye, should the victims refuse, their property is taken without a trial.

"In voluntary combinations, such as Anarchy"——

"Cut it short, cut it short," fairly yelled the voice beside me.

At the word "Anarchy," heard for the first time, the reporters sat bolt upright and the audience started. The very air asked: "What next?"

A creepy feeling stole over me. It was a creepy atmosphere. Here I was, in a house of Anarchists, so-called, and yet not one about me.

It was then my youthful athletic training stood me in good stead. I skipped sentences, hopped paragraphs, and jumped a page or two.

"Kropotkine," said I, in closing, "Kropotkine is the only all-around mental acrobat in this performance. He is the great If."

That is, I might have said so. As it was, I dwelt briefly upon his courage—in Europe; spoke a few words of greeting to foreign workers; and ingloriously retired amid—experience.

And—I found my hat.

Aug. McCraith.

Secret--ary Walker.

My friend E. C. Walker, secretary of the Sunrise Club, must be an etymologist. I am driven to this conclusion by his letter in another column, in which he defends himself against my charge that he was false to the duties of his office in declining to read to the club a letter of resignation which I sent to it through him. It is evident that he has been delving into Latin origins, and, finding that the word secretary comes from the Latin *secretum*, meaning a secret, and that a Latin *secretarius* was originally a confidant or depositary of secrets, he has concluded that, when he, as secretary, receives a piece of information, it is his duty to see that it goes no further. Acting upon this conclusion, he pocketed my letter of resignation, and thereby forced upon me the task of its further promulgation.

But my friend Walker is too literal. Even an etymologist is expected to use his brains. He cannot be allowed to look too strictly to the letter. He must enter a little into the spirit, and, in tracing the history of a given word, must endeavor to understand the rationale of its growth. Had such been the method of Mr. Walker's radical inquiry into secretarial beginnings, he would have discovered that, when the Latin *secretarius* ceased to be an ordinary confidant, or secret-keeper in particular, he ceased to be a keeper of all secrets entrusted to him by anybody and everybody, and it became as truly his function to convey to his employer the secrets entrusted to him for his employer, as to withhold from others the secrets entrusted to him by his employer. And similarly it is now the duty of a secretary, not to keep everything secret, but to put his master in possession of all information sent to him, and to keep secret only those things that his master bids him keep secret. Therefore Secretary Walker of the Sunrise Club, in failing to put his master, the club, in possession of the information addressed by me to the club through him, must be considered, in the absence of instructions from the club to withhold from it this information, an unfaithful officer.

There is no truth whatever in Mr. Walker's contention that the secretary is not the servant of the individual club-member. Of course I do not deny that the secretary is primarily the servant of the club. But the very fact that the club, in appointing a man its servant-secretary, assigns to him, among other duties, that of *serving* the individual club-member in a certain capacity—for instance, the capacity of intermediary for correspondence with the club—makes the secretary the servant of each member. To say that he is not is as ridiculous as to say that a hotel-waiter, simply because he is appointed by and responsible to the hotel-proprietor, is not the servant of the hotel-guest. And the secretary who refuses to present the letter of a member to the club is just as recreant to his duty to the member as is the hotel-waiter to his duty to the hotel-guest whose order to bring a napkin he refuses to obey.

Plain as this point is, however, I need not insist upon it. Mr. Walker's acknowledgment that he is the servant of the club is enough for my purpose. For, if he is the club's servant, then surely he is not the club's master. Yet, if his claim be admitted that he need read to the club only such letters as are germane to its purposes, and that the right to decide what letters are germane resides exclusively in him, then as surely is he the club's master, however stoutly he may claim to be its servant.

I cannot suspect Mr. Walker's good faith, but certainly he may be charged with gross carelessness in asserting that I demanded that he read my letter to the club in the presence of Mr. Pentecost. I did nothing of the kind. My demand was that the letter be read at "the next meeting of the club." The demand was intirely independent of the question of Mr. Pentecost's presence or absence, and independent also of the fact that Mr. Pentecost was scheduled to address that particular meeting. To so misstate an opponent's position as to give to a mere coincidence the appearance of a cause, inspiring motive, is not good behavior in controversy. Mr. Walker may believe it or not, but the truth is that my motive was simply a desire for the communication of my letter to the club at the earliest moment. With an ordinary club the earliest moment would have been the next business meeting. But the Sunrise Club never holds a business meeting; it holds only social meetings. Therefore in this case the earliest moment was the next social meeting. And, such being my demand, Mr. Walker was bound to read it at that meeting, whether Mr. Pentecost was present or not. For, if a secretary may, at the bidding of his own caprice, hold back a member's letter from one meeting to another, then he may equally hold it back indefinitely or permanently, which absurd prerogative, indeed, the situation has forced Mr. Walker to claim for himself. It is this that I branded as an assumption of the position of Papa to the club, and there is no gainsaying it.

If Mr. Walker did not desire to read my letter at the meeting specified, two other courses were open to him. He could have resigned, thus permitting the choice of a new secretary, or he could have submitted to the club, at the opening of the meeting, the question whether it would then listen to a letter which, in his opinion, it would be improper then to read. In the latter event, if the club had refused to hear the letter, my quarrel would have been with the club. As it is, my quarrel (though that word is rather too harsh) is with Mr. Walker for being unfaithful, not only to his duty to me as an individual club-member, but to his duty to the club whose servant he pretends to be.

In the case of the agricultural society supposed by Mr. Walker, I say unhesitatingly that it would be the obvious duty of the secretary to pursue one of the three courses named above, provided the society held no business meetings.

Much that Mr. Walker says about the creedlessness of the Sunrise Club is irrelevant. I have not characterized his invitation of Pentecost as a violation of duty or a wanton abuse of power. In this particular I question solely his judgment and discretion. He did not exceed his official powers in extending the invitation, and I, on the other hand, had an equal right to protest by resigning. It is true that the Sunrise Club imposes no moral tests; but neither does it (or, rather, as the event shows, it *does*) go out of its way to *select* notoriously insincere persons who have nothing of high value to contribute, to help it in its search for truth. When Pentecost shall have made an economic or political discovery Darwinian in its importance, perhaps the revolting members of the Sunrise Club will descend to the ignominious necessity of association with him. But the necessity of damaging self-respect by touching glasses with a hypocrite in order to be reassured by him of the stale truth that people generally get the government which they merit is, to say the least, not imperative. And no such plea can cover Mr. Walker's too obvious purpose to utilize a freak to draw a crowd. T.

Half an Hour with Justice.

Readers of Liberty probably remember the court incident in which Judge McAdam questioned my native Americanism. Lately I have had another and somewhat similar experience. Being summoned for jury duty in the criminal branch of the supreme court, I responded to the summons. As I sat in the court-room, wondering for what type of judicial insolence I was on this occasion to be made a target, who should ascend the bench but that holy terror, old "Chaos Come Again," the ex-recorder, Frederick W. Smyth, looking, to use the language of Joe Choate, as if his judicial face had just been freshly ironed. As usual, after jury roll-call, those claiming legal exemption were formed in line for private hearing of their respective excuses. In due course I reached the bench.

"What's yours?" curtly inquired Judge Smyth?

"I have already been pronounced incompetent to serve as a juror," was my answer.

"On what ground? On the ground of insanity?"

Though this seemed, at so early a stage, more than the usual savagery of judicial demeanor toward the inoffensive and the helpless, I managed to smile feebly, as I replied:

"*You* might think so. But the real reason is that my convictions regarding trial by jury are such as to prevent me from accepting the instructions of the court on points of law as absolutely binding."

"You think you know more than the court about the law?"

"I must judge for myself."

"Well, you'll have to serve. Remain in the court-room. We'll examine you on that later."

So I stepped down into the court-room and took a seat, though not much perturbed at the prospect, knowing perfectly well that the court was bluffing, and that, on being called to serve in the trial of an actual case, I should have only to restate publicly what I had already stated to the court in private, in order to be peremptorily challenged by either one side or the other.

When the remaining excuses had been disposed of, a case was called for trial,—a case of two policemen charged with blackmail,—and the examination of jurors began. The judicial sieve had rejected a number, but suffered the passage into the jury-box of four eminently

correct personages who seemed to stand in due awe of the sacred presence, when the clerk sonorously called:

"Benjamin A. Ticker."

"Tucker," said I, by way of correction, as I started for the chair.

"Oh! Benjamin A. Tucker," said the clerk.

"R. Tucker; *R*," I insisted, mindful of the example of Tony Weller in telling His Lordship to put Sam's name "down with a We."

Reaching the chair, I was about to make oath that I would tell the truth regarding my qualifications to serve as juror, when the court solemnly interrupted. With forefinger ominously lifted, Judge Smyth asked:

"Are you the man who said just now that you would not obey the instructions of the court?"

"What I said, sir, was that my convictions regarding trial by jury are such as to prevent me from accepting the instructions of the court on points of law as *absolutely binding*."

"But you would not obey the instructions of the court?"

"I would give great weight to the instructions of the court, in view of its expert knowledge."

"But,"—and with each reiteration the voice grew more menacing,—"though the law tells you that you *must* obey the instructions of the court on points of law, you nevertheless would not obey?"

"The principles in which I believe prevent me from saying *absolutely* that I would."

I surely thought, from the judge's manner, that the next words to fall from his lips would be nothing less than an order that I be put in irons; but, instead, there came this anti-climax:

"You are discharged; no such man as you is wanted on the jury."

And I walked quietly out.

And, as I went, I wondered how this judge, who at eleven o'clock ruled as a matter of law that I *must* do jury service *in spite* of my stated convictions, and at half past eleven ruled as a matter of law that I *cannot* do jury service *because* of these same convictions, could expect me to accept his instructions on points of law as those of one infallible.

I wondered also, remembering that he asked me if I think that I know more than the court about the law, whether he supposes that law of the State of New York which makes the jury judge of the law in criminal libel cases to be based upon the theory that the juror knows more than the judge about the law of criminal libel.

I wondered also whether he supposes such a theory to be the foundation of the law of Maryland and Illinois, which makes the jury judge of the law in all criminal cases.

I wondered also whether he supposes that the law, not only of New York, Maryland, and Illinois, but of all States and civilized countries, which makes the jury judge of the fact implies in the juror a capacity to weigh evidence superior to that of the judge.

I wondered also whether, in ordering me to remain in the court-room, he was governed by spite and a desire to punish; or whether he did so in order to create an opportunity for a bit of theatrical display; or whether he did so, thinking that he would vanquish me in a public argument, and in the half-hour's interval allowed his discretion to overcome his valor; or whether he hoped, by lording it over me, to terrorize the other talesmen present; or whether he wished to give public notice that thought, education, and mental independence are not desirable qualities in the administration of justice, and that the fate of men charged with crime is to be determined solely by martinets.

And about all these and many other things I am still wondering. T.

A Noble Life and Death.

William Hanson, a good and faithful and uncompromising comrade in the cause of Anarchism, died in Brooklyn on Sunday, December 19, in consequence of a draught of cyanide of potassium in brandy and water, administered by his own hand. The motive of his act was his inability to support himself, due to the decline of the trade by which for many years he had lived a life of modest independence. He forsook this trade several months ago, resolved to make a last, if Quixotic, effort to gain at least a meagre living at the congenial work of lecturing in favor of Anarchism. I knew he would fail, but I first learned of his plan after he had entered upon it, and I had not the heart to try to dissuade him,—knowing, moreover, that it would be useless to try, for he was inflexible. The day after his death the mail brought me the manuscript of his last lecture, "The Incompatibility of Business with Christianity," wrapped in the following bit of autobiography, written partly in the third person for the public, and partly in the first for me:

William Hanson was born March 15, 1831, at Huddersfield, Yorkshire, England. He left Liverpool for the United States January 16, 1849. From New York he went with a cousin to Cook county, Il.

There they hired a forty-acre farm, with a dog-house on it, and kept bachelor's hall. Mr. Hanson ploughed and sowed, reaped and mowed, milked cows, made butter, shot and cooked game, felled trees, sawed logs, split rails, built fences, cut cord-wood and firewood, dug ditches, built houses and barns, darned his own socks, and patched his own trousers.

Subsequently he educated himself, taught school, took a partial collegiate course, and married in 1865, since which time he has worked at the watchmaker's bench, that being the trade to which he was originally apprenticed by his father.

After President Lincoln's proclamation of emancipation he became a citizen of the United States, in Elmira, N. Y., in September, 1865. During the past twenty years, however, he has not voted at any election.

His religion is pure Christianity without dogmatic theology; his politics pure Anarchism. He is an optimist, and believes that all things work for good on lines of evolution. He also believes in freedom to suicide when the environment is too selfish and oppressive for the weal of the citizen.

This is my experience now. So farewell, friend Tucker, and don't be too hard on me.

WILLIAM HANSON.

"Hard," old friend! I am not apt to be hard upon an honest man. Your departure was an act of courage rather than of cowardice, and, in my view, you died as nobly as you lived. Farewell, and honored be your name by all the good! T.

Liberty has gladly and more than once commended and praised Judge Gaynor, of the New York supreme court, for his manly and intelligent defence of popular liberty and personal rights. It is disappointing and astonishing to read that, in a recent case tried before him, he so far forgot himself as to "rebuke" a jury for exercising its undoubted right. The jury, after deliberating for twenty-three hours, brought in a disagreement, and this so displeased Judge Gaynor that he petulantly and impertinently told them that "anyone who could not see into this case cannot see beyond his nose." In the first place, this is only his own opinion, and the jury did not ask him to express it. In the second place, even if Judge Gaynor was right, what right had he, under the law, to insult the jurors? Would he have suffered them to criticise any ruling of his as stupid and ignorant, even if they honestly thought so? Even the fact that Judge Gaynor was probably right in his characterization of the jury's intelligence in this instance does not excuse his *ex cathedra* condemnation. Evidently it is impossible for even good and fair-minded men to control the tendency to usurp and abuse authority.

A Disclaimer from Mr. Brown.

To the Editor of Liberty:

My good friend Mr. Wright has set up an amusing man of straw to knock down in his communication on "Liberty and the Money Question" in the last issue of Liberty.

I have not by me the text of what I said at the Iroquois Club, but I certainly know that I never *meant* to say that the money question might not come up in a form which would make it a most vital issue for Democrats and Anti-Democrats to divide upon; nor that, because money was a "tool," the question of liberty to use that tool in any form desired might not become a political question of the most overshadowing importance.

Despite Mr. Wright's apparent belief that I did say some such thing, I do not believe that I said anything which, by fair construction of all my remarks, could be so interpreted. I base my opinion not on memory, but on the proposition that I do not generally, even by mistake, state a proposition as my own which seems to myself absurd. And these positions, whether I took them or not, certainly are absurd.

I don't believe people ought "to be inhibited either as individuals or associations from using promises to pay money, based upon their credit, as a currency or circulating medium." I am in favor of absolutely free banking,—as good a free trader in money matters as in all others! And, as for not thinking such a prohibition important, I should be willing to make a political issue even of a prohibition to use some particular "tool" of carpentry, and fight to the death over it,—so fond of asserting and sustaining individual liberty am I.

Mr. Wright will have no warmer supporter than myself if he can get the "money question," in his sense, into practical politics, and nobody willing to work harder to align the Democratic party on the right side.

But Mr. Wright knows as well as I know that there is no such question in practical politics now, and no such issue between the Republican and Democratic parties. What I did mean to say at the Iroquois Club, and what I believe I *did* say, was that Democrats and Anti-Democrats would never permanently divide on the question of a "double" or a "single" standard, or on "monometallism" and "bimetallism," or on the issue whether two labor products rather than one should be given an absolutely indefensible "legal tender" character.

I don't flatter myself it is important what I did say, but I do not want my friends among the readers of Liberty to suppose that I am an inconsistent "trimmer." EDWARD OSGOOD BROWN.

Ethics.

"All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient."
—PAUL.

The transitional character of the present period is especially seen in the heterogeneous teachings that constitute its moral code, and the curiously inharmonious set of accompanying actions. This discrepancy between word and deed in the domain of morals has existed, indeed, at all periods since man left the savage condition, but with an increasing complexity of civilization the discrepancy might be expected to increase as it is observed to do.

The contradiction between deeds and professions is often humorously noticed; the deacon who is clever at a horse trade, the temperance preacher who asks for a glass of gin because it looks like water, are familiar jokes. Yet in all seriousness what are the prospects of a social condition where formulas and their interpretations are so much at variance?

What are we to think of people who send their children to Sunday-schools, where they are taught that to turn the other cheek is part of the Christian character, and to week-day schools, where they are trained in military battalions to admire deliberate slaughter? Or of those who are paraded in annual procession with banners announcing them to be "Little Lambs of Jesus," and in their childish quarrels are urged on to fisticuffs by their elders, with a warm approval of "fighting it out" as the best way of settling differences?

Or what shall we say of a clergy which preaches the religion alleged to be of love, but which was never yet known officially or as a body to protest against war; which has rather urged it on upon both sides by prayers for victory?

It is unnecessary to follow up these extraordinary discrepancies. In every part of modern life they are found. In the law, which is scarcely more than a synonym for injustice in the popular mouth; in business, which, it is publicly announced, only a fool would expect to be conducted in accordance with the teachings of the Sermon on the Mount; in the family, which is supposed to be based on affection, but which is really based on hatred suppressed only by violence, —we find everywhere a tangle of monstrous incompatibilities between preaching and practice.

With long faces and a mournful wail about the imperfections of human nature such conditions are usually met.

We, however, need not feel called upon either to approve or condemn. A scientific investigation demands criticism, not denunciation or apology.

The really important thing to note is that such discrepancies are evidence that the existing moral code is inadequate to determine conduct.

When reactionists, frightened by radical research, cry: "You are attacking our moral principles!" we very calmly reply: "Of what use are these principles that you should value them so highly?"

At the bottom of the present system of morality, if it is worthy of the name of system, is the ancient theological notion of human depravity. In the early time, when men still retained a taste for killing, the observed fact that killing each other was incompatible with the advantages to be derived from living in each others' society was further sanctioned by the statement that killing was forbidden by a divine decree. That a taste for killing should nevertheless exist could be explained only by an assumed innate depravity.

To this assumed depravity, this inborn tendency to evils, this unholiness of the natural man, were attributed the desires for various gratifications, in which, it was observed, unrestrained indulgence was socially impossible. The heart of man was declared to be "desperately wicked." The "natural man" and natural desires were all included in the condemnation; and it was taught that virtue consisted in denying ourselves gratification of our natural desires. Happiness, it was said, was not to be expected during life; the best that we could do was to endure the continual succession of desires presented tantalizingly to us as a training in self-denial, in the hope and confidence of another life, where a more reasonable state of things existed, and desires might be fully satisfied.

It is hardly to be wondered at that such a code should be found impracticable.

Certain desires, as we now perceive, it is absolutely essential to gratify for the preservation of life.

Certain others must be justified for its completeness.

If a starving man can steal bread, it is vain to expect him not to. If it be necessary, in order to make a living, to violate all the commandments every day, every day they must be violated, for a living must be made. And that is why every day they are violated, for a strict compliance would mean diminished vitality,—that is to say, partial or complete death.

Nor are we the first to observe this impracticability of the moral code. In mediæval times the thoughtful men of the day perceived it, and set themselves to lay down minutely just how far moral rules were to be observed, and in what cases such rules might be relaxed or disregarded.

Casuists, they were called, and they investigated all supposable circumstances where the moral code did not hold, until casuistry came to be regarded as a specious justification of immorality. It is no wonder that it did come to be so regarded, for these doctors taught with a double tongue, saying at one moment that the moral code is divine and perfect, and at the next admitting that, after all, it is impracticable.

Contrary to the usual opinion, the very worst condemnation of a moral code is that it should be impracticable. Usually it is held that a moral code need not be practicable; that, after all, it need only be a distant ideal, toward which we may aspire, but to attain which we need never expect.

This is why men put up so calmly with the absurd discrepancies between current theories and current practices.

These discrepancies, however, cannot be longer glossed over in this way.

The times call for a practicable code of action. Some kind of a guide the maze which we are called to traverse demands, and a guide which is admittedly impracticable is worse than none; whatever rule we adopt, it is absolutely indispensable that it be both practicable and practical.

The union between theory and conduct must be perfect; only by such a union can we escape the disgraceful differences between Sunday professions and week-day doings, which are the condemnation of all existing codes.

The foundation of the new system is the denial of the primary postulate of the old, and the assertion of the contrary.

Natural desires, held by the old system to be essentially depraved,—that is to say, abnormal,—are, by the new, perceived to be essentially normal. Although at times abnormal desires may exist, yet even these we have learned to regard as symptoms of disorder in the organism, rather than as spontaneous aberrations.

We have learned to regard desire as an indication of the needs of the organism, which must be to some extent gratified, under penalty of partial death.

Thus the desire for dainties in eating, once held to be reprehensible, is now seen to be a natural demand of the system for the varied diet so essential to health. The restlessness of children was once sternly repressed, while perfect stillness and studiousness, so repellent to the childish mind, were enforced. By our later light we know that restless activity points to the necessary development of the muscular system before the expanding of the mind.

So again we begin dimly to perceive that highway robberies, burglaries, forgeries, defaultings, are susceptible of a more profound explanation than mere original depravity, which our fathers, with their less critical minds, postulated for every moral delinquency. We are beginning to see that such things are done more frequently in times of business depression, when it is harder for everybody to make a living; and that the desire for sustenance which prompts them is a desire which cannot be denied without incurring death as a penalty, which men fear more than the penalty of jail.

Desire is really only the conscious link between the circumstances that constitute motives and the consequent actions.

Let but a given combination present itself to the mind, and the desire for some adaptive act of the organism inevitably arises. And the act as inevitably follows the desire, unless conflicting desires are aroused by counter circumstances.

This inevitable sequence of action upon desire it is quite out of our power to prevent. Even if by education we have learned self control, so that our actions do not follow our desires with the promptitude that would otherwise be displayed, yet this education is itself one of the circumstances that go to make up the group of circumstances that constitutes motive; and this self control is but a group of desires for other benefits, which the mind has learned to picture as more pleasurable, though more distant.

When it is seen that the feeling which we call desire is but a reflex of the perception of certain circumstances, and that the action which the preponderating desire points to invariably succeeds the desire, it becomes evident that it is vain to expect to modify men's actions by modifying their desires, without first changing the circumstances which produce the desires.

Exhortations to self-denial, appeals for a change of our corrupt nature, denunciations of vice in the abstract, and laudation of virtue pure and simple,—these must be brought home by setting up some other circumstance, such as the hope of a hypothetical Jerusalem the Golden, before they can produce the desired effect. As this hope, long deferred, gradually yields to scepticism, the homilies lose their force, and the preaching has no effect upon conduct.

When widespread corruption is discovered, as recently by the investigating committee of the New York State senate, it is vain to raise the cry of indignation: "You ought!—you ought! gentlemen of the city government, you ought to be better! Why are you not square and honest and beyond contamination? You are bad! bad! bad men! Do not deny it, but hereafter be, we implore you, truly virtuous!"

Of what use is such expostulation?

With the same circumstances every other man would do just the same things. What, you say, are there no honest men left; is it true that every man has his price?

By no means. But it is true that, when you have brought together the circumstances that make a man incorruptible,—inheritance, education, surroundings,—you have made a man who is quite unsuited to achieve a place on the police force. He hasn't the qualities to get it, and, if he got it, he wouldn't want that kind of a place.

As long as politics and police forces exist, based, as they are, upon violence, so long only men who take pleasure in violence can be persuaded to have much to do with either of them.

So, again, people often deplore the hardness and avarice of the rich, when riches can be best acquired by those who are hard and avaricious. A hard and avaricious nature is one of the chief qualifications required to get wealth; it is one of the facts of the environment that is well suited to make money. How impossible, then, is it that he who has made money by virtue of his native hardness and avarice should be expected to display quite contrary qualities in the spending of it! If we want to be surrounded by people who are liberal and gentle, we cannot obtain such by exhorting those to be liberal and gentle whom the state of society requires to be parsimonious and cruel. While things are as they are, people must tend to be parsimonious and cruel, simply because the liberal and gentle are killed off. But, when a state of society is devised in which a man may make a better living by being liberal and gentle, we shall have such people about us, and not before.

It is vain to urge anybody to be truthful, or honest, or energetic, or reposeful, or buoyant, or dignified, if the facts be against it,—if ancestry makes him boorish, and schooling makes him a liar, and ill luck turns his vivacity into gloom.

What he must be, he must be; he is the creature of the whole past, a dry leaf blown by the wind. Can he do nothing, then? Far from it. Though he cannot change himself, he too may change some of the circumstances that have made him what he is. Most of all, he may, by contemplation, learn whether his comprehension of the circumstances is as good as it might be.

Very likely he will find in his mind some fatal misapprehension, some untenable superstition, some indefensible deference to worn-out conventionalities, that he may remove by the mere recognition. But without changing in some way the circumstances that call forth the actions no man can change either

his own actions or those of others.

We have spoken so far of actions in general, with no reference to ethical distinctions in the quality of actions as right or wrong. If you were to ask one of a generation ago, or one still preserving the traditions and modes of thought of a generation ago,—and there are yet many such,—if you were to ask such a one what the difference is between right and wrong,—what ultimately determines actions as right and what as wrong,—there would be no hesitation about his reply. Right, he would say, is that which God wills: wrong is that which is contrary to God's commands.

Entirely apart from any benefit to doer or sufferer, he would insist, obedience—blind obedience—to God is the only moral rule.

Although this is still the position of the majority of mere number, it is not worth serious contest. The minority of intelligence has quite relinquished it. More than this, the great mass of the people has been unconsciously influenced by the same circumstances that have consciously convinced the more thoughtful; so that most of those who think that they adhere to the old theological moral standard really are adherents of more modern ideas.

This more modern standard is the recognition that right and wrong are but phrases indicating what is beneficial and what is deleterious. The battle fought over this question years ago and never decided by clash of controversy the passage of time has settled. "I am not doing anything wrong" and "I am not doing anything that hurts anybody" today are synonyms.

When it comes to the practical determination of what acts are to be done and what to be avoided several criterions are proposed. The "categorical ought" of a certain school would be admirable, were it only intelligible. These say that there is, in the mind of each, a primitive, simple, unanalyzable perceptive instinct of what is "right." The trouble is that for each individual there is a different "ought." For one brought up in the old school of the duelling time there is nothing for it, in case of an insult, but to fight. Fight he ought, so thinks he, and to fight he is driven by as imperious a dictum of his pugnacious conscience as that which impels the Quaker to abstain from fighting as the worst of evils. The devout Catholic finds relief to his conscience in confession and purchased masses; to the equally devout Protestant confession and masses seem worse than what they are expected to remedy. The "oughts" in these cases are contradictory.

The bootlegger thinks that it is his "duty" to beat his wife and children; to the village storekeeper such a moral standard seems reprehensible.

Hardly two men agree upon what "ought" to be done throughout; how then can anybody's conviction of what "ought" to be done be a standard for anybody else?

A more frequently expressed formula is the familiar "greatest good of the greatest number." This, while more intelligible as a principle than the instinctive "ought" theory, is less available as a practical guide.

He who is convinced that he must do what his instinct tells him is right has a chart that is at least clear enough. If many have rocks marked where there are harbors, and deep water where there are shoals, to go by it may mean destruction.

Still, such as it is, it is decipherable, and a man may do as he "ought" and try to compel everybody else to do as they "ought" all his days, and never know why he and they find doing as they "ought" so disagreeable and unprofitable an occupation.

On the other hand, if we start with the proposition that we are to act for the "greatest good of the greatest number," we are brought up by questions.

Shall I, in these hard times, make strictly true representations and miss several large sales? If I do, I may fail entirely, my family suffer for generations, my creditors receive only twenty cents on a dollar. If I do not, my customer may after all be perfectly aware of the defect that I have in mind, and glad to get the bargain notwithstanding; or the defect for him may make the purchase useless, the loss may involve him in other losses to I know not what extent, his family and creditors,—and so on, in an endless, impenetrable series of consequences on both sides.

Or, if it be a public matter, how is one nearer to a solution by talking of the greatest good of the greatest number? Shall there be, let us say, a protective tariff, or a tariff for revenue, or no tariff? Who is capable of laying aside the natural prejudice in favor of his own interests, and judging of what is for the greatest good of the greatest number?

Who can tell, even with the study of years, how many alone will be affected by such measures on either side; or, if the exact number be determinable, the intensity of the aggregate of happiness or unhappiness involved?

As the former criterion was too narrow, so this is too broad, to be of service.

But beyond this lies another question.

Granting for a moment that it is conceivable that we might determine the greatest good, we must first determine what is good. This, simple enough to one who thinks that good consists in obedience to a code of supernaturally-imposed commands, becomes extremely complicated to one who holds that "goodness" corresponds with benefit received and given.

Take such a matter as the prohibition by law of the sale or use of alcoholic liquors.

Is it beneficial, or otherwise, that such a law be enacted? We have, on the one hand, the certainty that the excessive use of alcohol is physically injurious, and that habitual drunkards are apt to be unhappy themselves and to make others unhappy. On the other hand, it is also certain that much pleasure and no appreciable detriment is caused by the moderate use of alcohol. Beyond this there is the consideration that heavy drinkers may be adopting the best treatment to kill themselves off; and the counter consideration that the capacity to stand hard drinking seems to characterize conquering races, and that we stand no chance with the drinkers, unless we learn to drink too.

Or, in less warmly contested matters, what is the measure of goodness?

Is it good for a wife to leave a worthless husband, and do the best she can to support her children; or is it good for her to stay with him, and let her own life and her children's be blasted?

Is it "good" to undersell, and perhaps ruin, a competitor in business; or is it "good" to let him undersell us, and be ruined ourselves?

Is it "good" to insist upon unquestioning obedience in children; or is it "good" to teach them rather to guide themselves?

"The greatest good of the greatest number" is lacking as a guide to action, both because nobody can determine what really is the proportional number of those who are affected by a certain action, and because, if this could be ascertained, it could not be determined which of two courses of action is good and which is not good.

Relinquishing such general formulas as useless for guidance in the multiplicity and perplexity of the daily actions that are required of us, we must look for a rule of action as flexible as the conditions of action are variable.

We have admitted that actions are prompted by desires, and that happiness, or pleasurability, is in the adaptation of actions to gratify desires. The only possible gauge of this adaptation is the opinion of the individual who experiences the desire.

Do what pleases you is the practical rule of the new ethics.

There is no doubt that the mere statement of this rule will raise upon many lips a cry of protest. What, then? it will be asked; do you really counsel a blind and bestial gratification of all desires? Do you mean to say that an unreasoning, mad rush by all, strong and weak, refined and brutal, to satisfy each his lowest, and therefore most powerful, instincts and passions, regardless of the sufferings of others, would be an advantageous state of affairs? Can you dare to set up such as an ethical ideal?

Nothing of the sort is my intention. Such a possibility exists only in the imagination, startled by a sudden, unexpected view.

Indeed, the general revulsion from such a fancied picture is sufficient indication that a mad rush for the indulgence of animal desires is not the dominant desire in most people.

But the only reason for not indulging ourselves in the gratification of the lowest desires is that it might preclude the gratification of higher desires.

The problem ceases to be a moral problem in any proper sense of the word, and becomes a purely intellectual one. How shall we most completely gratify all, or as many as possible, of our desires? Of conflicting desires, which shall we gratify, which forego? Or shall we compromise, by gratifying some a little, some to a greater degree, some entirely?

Shall a man go a fishing every Sunday, and neglect his family; or shall he abstain from ever going a fishing, until he hates the very sight of his family; or shall he sometimes go and sometimes stay?

For each one the answer will differ; but, as there are few men that have families and have no pleasure in their society, so there are few who can always go a-fishing without diminishing the total amount of their gratification. Moreover, in a state of freedom, if a man finds no pleasure in taking care of his family, his family—wife and children—may find it no pleasure to stay with him, and will be quite at liberty to go.

Considered as a balancing of gratifications to be obtained, the phrase, "Do what pleases you," although strictly correct, may not be as precise as another phrase, "Do what is for your interest." The latter implies a due consideration of all pleasures, near and distant, and a judicious choice among them.

Of course, I do not mean to say that the rule, "Do what is for your interest," affords us any clue as to what really is for our interest; and, in determining, each for himself, what he thinks is for his interest, many mistakes will be made; greater ultimate interests will be lost sight of, in view of nearer, though lesser, ones, or immediate pleasures will be sacrificed in hope of future advantage, which may, after all, fail us; yet, on the whole, actions will be better regulated than if conformity to a fixed standard were the rule. Suppose, for instance, that it were a religious requirement that each person should eat just so many ounces of meat, bread, vegetables, and the rest, daily. Some would easily conform; others would boldly defy the rule, and eat as much as they pleased, trusting to timely repentance; others would secrete food, and eat it on the sly, and boast at the delight of illicit enjoyment.

Perhaps some defender of the old code will say: "After all, these moral precepts are but abstract statements of what has been found to be for the best advantage of each of us. It is because truthfulness, and honesty, and so on, are for our advantage that they are inculcated."

Indeed, they who say so are partly right; yet they themselves never thought of taking such a position, until they were forced to it by newer views.

Their old view was that truth must be told at all costs; that it was often, or usually, to men's advantage to lie, but that, from fear of supernatural revenge, they must abstain from lying, in accordance with supernatural command. To recommend truth-telling as advantageous would have seemed to them almost sacrilegious.

The new view has shown them the weakness of their former position, and now they seek to justify the old moral code on grounds of its utility.

They may be right, and they may be wrong. Doubtless many of the old precepts will be justified by the new standard, while others will be abrogated. It matters little; it is the principle of rational criticism that is to be established against the principle of blind deference. Ethics is to be made a matter of brains, not of heart.

This exclusion of sentiment as a criterion of criticism by no means excludes sentiments as valid motives, or the gratification of sentiments as admissible pleasures. On the contrary, the highest pleasures are the indulgence of certain sentiments, and the performance of the implied actions. Hospitality, benevolence, love, when these can be intelligently exercised without too serious disadvantage otherwise, are desires in the satisfaction of which we find our highest happiness. Nor are there any stronger or more persistent desires in human nature than these altruistic desires. The hunter will share his last mouthful with a comrade; the father will sacrifice his own life's object to make his son's life more complete. When circumstances render it impossible to gratify these, an unsatisfied and painful feeling ensues; as when the multitude of beggars makes it impossible to indulge ourselves in the pleasure of almsgiving,—compels us to harden and chill our hearts, and knowingly reduce ourselves to a lower grade of immediately pleasurable feeling.

It is, indeed, chiefly to do away with material obstacles to the indulgence of pleasurable altruistic emotion that changes in the social mechanism are by many nowadays so earnestly studied.

If you would like to test the efficacy of this new egoistic way of looking at things, as opposed to the old notion of "duty," try a little experiment. The next time that you are going to sit up with a sick person, or to walk home a couple of miles with somebody, in reply to their fears that they are giving you trouble say as boldly as you please: "I never do anything that is not for my own gratification; I do as I do because it gives me pleasure."

You will find opposed to you a face filled with smiles. On the other hand, how many worthy people are there, doing all sorts of things for others, and enjoying doing it, yet making their kindness almost an offence by their continual talk that they are doing it because it is their duty.

Another great advantage of the egoistic view is the diminution and eventual abolition of censoriousness.

Take away the notion that a man does certain acts because he is depraved, because he is a "bad" man, and criticism immediately becomes milder.

Circumstances, not original sin, are seen to be at fault. He may be a man to be distrusted; he is not therefore to be denounced, or necessarily even disliked. Under egoism it becomes possible to "hate the sin and love the sinner," while under orthodox morality there is nothing for it but to hate the sinner and love the sin. Synagogues must breed Pharisees.

Important as this ethical view is in its bearing upon individual conduct, it is even more important in its bearing upon public affairs.

As at present constituted, governments have three functions,—the defence of their subjects, the execution of public works, and the enforcement of a code of morals. The last, disavowed in words, too often in fact predominates. People ought not to be allowed to do so; it isn't right; there ought to be a law against it. That is the crude popular talk.

When it is once realized that abstract right and wrong do not exist; that each one fulfils his life only by fulfilling his desires,—there remains but one precept that might be called moral. This is it: that each, in fulfilling his desires as much as possible, should not prevent others from fulfilling their desires as much as possible. This is to say that no one should restrain the actions of others on general grounds of morality, or on any ground except on that of their unnecessarily limiting his own liberty of action.

The social problem resolves itself into the question of how to let people do as they please, not how to stop them from doing as they please.

This naturally abolishes government as a censor of morals. People can drink a little, or to excess; on Saturdays, or Sundays, or every day; go to church or to the theatre; form marriage ties with witnesses or without, for life or less; chew tobacco or gum; wear men's clothes or women's clothes, as best pleases them; gamble with either stocks or cards or roulette wheels; bet on insurance policies or on horses,—do anything they please, without let or hindrance.

As administrator of public works, too, government must go. As the superstitious veneration of law declines, and "law-abiding" begins to be a term of reproach, it will be seen that the taxes forced from all to pay for such public works are in themselves a denial of the individual's liberty to dispose of his money as he pleases,—briefly theft; and government in this phase too will be superseded by voluntary contributions. Finally, what little defence liberty now has from government is obtained through the same system of taxation, and the defence of liberty itself must be handed over to volunteers.

By the new ethics—the do as you please code—government by force must go, and voluntary co-operation and defence begin.

JOHN BEVERLEY ROBINSON.

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The Sunrise Club and Mr. Tucker.

While greatly regretting that Mr. Tucker has made an internal affair of the Sunrise Club a matter of press discussion, it is now necessary for me to state my view of the question raised by him.

Why I did not suspect that the propriety of inviting Hugh O. Pentecost to open at the first dinner of this season would be seriously disputed will appear when I reply to Mr. Tucker's animadversions upon my action as secretary.

The main contention of my critic is that it is the duty of the secretary to read a letter of resignation, no matter what its contents, at the meeting selected for said reading by the retiring member. The validity of this contention I explicitly deny.

The secretary is the servant of the club, not of any particular member of the club. As secretary he may properly do what the constitution and by-laws (written or unwritten) of the club authorize or permit him to do, no less, no more. He may not, without usurpation, apply a test to members or speakers that is not clearly applied by the club itself. It is not one of his duties to indiscriminately read letters of resignation or other communications. As the club's servant, he is required to read only such letters as are germane to the purposes of the organization. I can not imagine a claim more "untenable" than this—that the secretary is bound to read any letter of resignation, regardless of what it contains. To illustrate: suppose that the secretary of an agricultural society invites A to speak on potato blight at one of its meetings, and that B, a member, thereupon sends in a letter of resignation, in which he declares that he will not remain in a society which permits a Methodist to speak in its sessions, and he demands that the secretary read this letter at the meeting when the Methodist addresses the society. Is the secretary under obligation to read this letter? I say, no; he is the secretary of an agricultural body, and it is no part of his duty to help apply a test not contemplated by the society. There are scores and hundreds of conceivable cases in which the secretary would not only be justified in refusing to read letters of members, but in which he would be justly and severely censurable if he did read them.

So much for the general questions of the duties of secretaries. Now to the specific case of the Sunrise Club. Like Mr. Tucker, I was at the first meeting called by Mr. and Mrs. Robinson. From that day to this I have thought that the Sunrise Club was a club without a creed, either religious, political, economic, ethical, or other. I have never understood that it assumed to decide in advance that what a speaker might say was or was not true, or that it was inspired by either sincerity or insincerity. I have taken it for granted that we went to its dinners to hear what was said, and to decide individually at that time the merits and the demerits of each argument, regardless of the record of the speaker for either orthodoxy or sincerity. I have assumed that we were a body of thinkers, capable of listening to any argument from anybody and of extracting truth from even the most unpromising sources. I did not think the club was a church, and that its members were moral dogmatists, and I do not think so now. In a word, to repeat, I was thoroughly convinced that the Sunrise Club was creedless, and therefore I repudiated the notion that it was a part of my duty as secretary to help any member put into effect a moral boycott, for precisely the same reason that I repudiated the notion that it was a part of my duty as secretary to help any member put into effect a religious or a political boycott. Consequently, when Mr. Tucker wrote a letter of resignation, in which he attacked Mr. Pentecost on moral grounds, and demanded that I read that letter to the club in the presence of Mr. Pentecost, I unequivocally refused to accede to the demand. I stand by my refusal. My position is impregnable if it is established that the Sunrise Club is creedless morally as well as politically and religiously. But, if I am mistaken in my interpretation of the unwritten constitution of the club; if the club have a moral creed which is the test of fitness of members and speakers,—then it is a part of my duty as secretary to apply that test. In that case Mr. Tucker can take my place, and I must go into banishment.

E. C. WALKER.

Mackay's Life of Stirner.

My dear Tucker:

Almost seven years have passed since I wrote my first and last letter to Liberty. At that time I was able to tell you that my "Anarchists" was finished.

To-day another work is forthcoming, whose publication will so interest the readers of Liberty that I beg to be permitted to say a few words to them about it.

It is my biography of Max Stirner, whose completion, after years of labor, I can to-day announce. It will bear the title: "Max Stirner: Sein Leben und sein Werk"; and by the end of January, 1898, the first copy, I hope, will be in your hands. A new and very flourishing Berlin publishing house, Schuster & Löffler, will bring out the book, and bestow on its external appearance all possible care.

If it is true, as one of the greatest and subtlest of German writers on literature, Hermann Hettner, declares, that "everyone may pride himself on his industry," I may avail myself of this truth on this occasion, and say that only years of labor and industry have enabled me to put in the place of the five lines (of which three were false) which constituted all that was then publicly known of the life of the great thinker, a book of several hundred pages. If I have not succeeded in filling *all* the gaps in this forgotten life, it is not my fault; I have rescued from the past what I could.

But the story of my work is too long for me to relate here. A large part of the "Introduction" of my book is devoted to it. Here let me state simply the scheme of the narrative. In the first chapter I give an account of the early youth of Stirner; in the second, of his years of study and teaching. All this without any other facts than mere dates to build on.

The picture becomes more animated in the third chapter, where I treat of the circle of the "Free" in Berlin, the only circle in which Stirner ever moved, and from which "Max Stirner" (fourth chapter) speaks to us as a living personality.

The next chapter, the fifth, is devoted to a consideration of his immortal work: "Der Einzige und sein Eigenthum;" and the last treats of the last ten years of his life, when already he had been forgotten, and left to die in embarrassment and poverty ("The Last Decade").

Three illustrations,—the house in Bayreuth where he was born, the house where he died, and his grave in Berlin,—several fac-similes, among which is the only letter by him still extant, and a postscript complete the book, if one may speak of completeness at all.

Simultaneously with my biography I publish a volume: "Max Stirner's Kleinere Schriften und seine Entgegnungen auf die Kritik seines Werkes: 'Der Einzige und sein Eigenthum.' Aus den Jahren 1842–1847." It contains five essays and two rejoinders,—that is, everything that Stirner wrote except the great work of his life and his "Geschichte der Reaktion."

To-day Stirner is not so little known in Germany as he was eight years ago when I again discovered his work. In a cheap edition he is now in many hands; I wish he were in all hands. When will an English translation spread his influence in the New World? No better soil for his teaching of the knowledge of our true interests than that in which you, my dear Tucker, have planted the teaching of Anarchism!

In the sign of Stirner we are all doing battle; in his sign we conquer daily, to-day and to-morrow, and so each day anew! Hurrah for Anarchy!

Cordially yours,

JOHN HENRY MACKAY.

NERVI, NEAR GENOA, HOTEL EDEN, DECEMBER 6, 1897.

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